end users committed under court orders as well as small scale consumers having allocations upto 0.05 MMSCMD. The position about availability of gas is regularly shared with the Ministry of Power.

(b) Power projects developers are expected to enter into firm tie-ups for fuel supplies before executing such projects. The Cental Electricity Authority has reported that many proposals for gas based power plants which were planned for commissioning during the last year of Tenth Plan or in the beginning of Eleventh Plan have been delayed due to non-tie-up of gas availability.

(c) The steps taken to increase the availability of natural gas in the country include efforts for increasing domestic gas production under New Exploration Licensing Policy, import of liquefied natural gas and initiatives for gas imports through transnational pipelines.

Petrochemical Project at Mangalore

1566. SHRI K.B. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and the State Government of Karnataka to set up the Rs. 21,000 crore petrochemicals project in Mangalore was signed recently;

(b) if so, when it was signed;

(c) whether Government have cleared the proposed project as per the original plans; and

(d) by when, it will become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) and (b) As informed by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), the projects engisaged in the Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) signed on 30.08.2004 between ONGC on the one hand and the Government of Karnataka through the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) and Kanara Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) on the other hand, *inter-alia* include a Cracker and a Polyolefin Plant.

(c) The Board of Directors of ONGC is empowered to clear the projects within their Navaratna Power.

(d) Pending completion of the detailed techno-economic Feasibility Studies by MRPL/ONGC and decision of the Board thereon, no details of time schedule of the completion of the project can be fixed.